DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 404 476 CE 073 415

AUTHOR Woloszyk, Carl A.
TITLE Vocational Education's Linkages with the Business Community of Michigan.
INSTITUTION Michigan State Council on Vocational Education, Lansing.
PUB DATE Jun 96
NOTE 95p.
AVAILABLE FROM Michigan Center for Career and Technical Education, 230 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1034.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Curriculum Development; Education Work Relationship; *Employer Attitudes; Focus Groups; Partnerships in Education; Postsecondary Education; Questionnaires; *School Business Relationship; Secondary Education; State Surveys; Student Organizations; Tables (Data); *Unions; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS Employer Surveys; *Michigan

ABSTRACT

The extent of linkages of vocational education with Michigan's business community was examined through a survey of employers and labor union representatives and five employer focus groups. Of the 583 public and private sector employers and union representatives who received the questionnaire, 185 (31.9%) returned usable responses. The questionnaires contained questions on the employer's organization, industry, demographic/personal characteristics, and involvement in the following aspects of vocational education: curriculum, school-to-work, evaluation, and vocational student organizations. Vocational programs were found to have solid employer support in Michigan. The survey respondents and focus group members believed the following: employers should play a meaningful role in vocational curriculum design/development; vocational curricula should be ground solidly in industry-based skill standards; and interpersonal skills (teamwork, decision making, problem solving, sociability) should be taught along with technical skills in school- and work-based settings. Support for school-to-work initiatives and for increasing marketing of vocational education's benefits to students, parents, the general public, school counselors, and school board members was also strong. (Seventeen tables are included. Appendixes constituting approximately 40% of this document contain the following: survey questionnaire and cover letter; thank-you letters to survey and focus group respondents; and focus group questions, cover letter, and meeting summaries.) (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 404 476

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION'S LINKAGES WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY OF MICHIGAN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C Wolosyk

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE073415

JUNE, 1996

MICHIGAN COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Michigan State Board of Education

Clark Durant, President

Marilyn F. Lundy, Vice President

Dorothy Beardmore, Secretary

Barbara Roberts Mason, Treasurer

Kathleen Straus, NASBE Delegate

Ruth Braun

Sharon Wise

Gary L. Wolfram

Ex Officio Members

John Engler, Governor

Arthur E. Ellis, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Michigan State Board of Education
Statement of Assurance of Compliance with Federal Law

The Michigan State Board of Education complies with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education.

MICHIGAN COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (MCOVE) 1995-96

Mr. Lewis Driskell
Chairperson
Flint

President & CEO
Union Printing Company

Mr. Robert Vanderson
Vice Chairperson
Grand Rapids

President
Jackobson Heating and Cooling Company, Inc.

Mr. Mark Alexander
Lansing

Administrative Assistant
MI State AFL-CIO

Dr. Felix Chow
Battle Creek

Director
Calhoun Area Tech Center

Mr. James Dittmer
Ludington

Owner
Sunnside Fruit Farm

Ms. Patricia Hall
Benton Harbor

Dean of Occupational Studies
Lake Michigan College

Ms. Joyce Hawkins
Big Rapids

Associate Professor
College of Technology
Ferris State University

Mr. Charles W. McCallum
East Lansing

Workforce Commission
& Venture Catalyst Network

Mr. Ron Morley
Clair

Administrative Assist/Director
Clair-Gladwin ISD

Ms. Shirley Musick
Ferndale

Counseling and Career-Technical Education
Ferndale Schools

Mr. Gerald Ojibway
Marquette

Professor/Counselor
Northern Michigan University

Mr. William Peterson
Detroit

International Representative
UAW Skilled Trades Department

Mr. Ozzie Smith
Grand Rapids

Owner
Blockout Pest Control Business

Ms. Mary Miller
Executive Director

Mr. John L. Williams
Administrative Support

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 1

LIST OF TABLES 3

FOREWORD 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5

I. PURPOSE OF STUDY AND OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES 7

Purpose 7
Procedures 8

II. EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT WITH PUBLIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION 11

General Characteristics of Organizations 11
Characteristics of Respondents 14
Curriculum Involvement 15
Secondary 15
Postsecondary 16
School-to-Work Involvement 19
Secondary 19
Postsecondary 20
Evaluation Involvement with Vocational Education 23
Secondary 23
Postsecondary 23
Vocational Student Organization Involvement 25
Secondary 25
Postsecondary 25
Other types of Involvement 26
Secondary 26
Postsecondary 26
Findings Regarding Employer Involvement 27

III. EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES 30

TABLE OF CONTENTS—CONTINUED

Secondary 30
Postsecondary 33
Findings Regarding Employer Support for Vocational Education 35

IV. BARRIERS TO INCREASED PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION 36

Secondary 36
Postsecondary 37

V. SPECIFIC CONCERNS OR OPINIONS ABOUT PUBLIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION 39

VI. EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION 41

Findings Regarding Employer Perceptions of Public Vocational Education 43

VII. CONCLUSIONS 48

VIII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS 52

Initiatives and Methods to Assist the Private Sector in the Modernization of Vocational Education 52
Evaluation Criteria for Vocational Education Programs 53
Conduct of Vocational Education Programs to Emphasize the Use of Business and Labor Concerns 53
Procedures to Ensure and Enhance Public Participation 54

APPENDICES

A. Cover Letter for Survey Questionnaire 56

B. Survey of Employers and Labor Union Representative to Determine Extent of Involvement in the Delivery of Vocational Education in Michigan 58

TABLE OF CONTENTS--CONTINUED

C. Thank You Letter to Survey Respondents 69

D. Focus Group Questions 71

E. Cover Letter for Focus Groups 73

F. Thank You to Focus Group Respondents 76

G. Focus Group Meeting Summaries 78

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) acknowledges its gratitude to Dr. Carl A. Woloszyk, the major contributor and principal investigator to this study on "Vocational Education's Linkages with the Business Community of Michigan." Dr. Woloszyk is a Professor and teacher-educator in career and technical education at Western Michigan University. He has had extensive experience with vocational education by previously serving as a state consultant for vocational education, an intermediate school district administrator for career and technical education, and a marketing education teacher-coordinator. He has authored numerous publications and conducted extensive research concerning education, employment, and training programs. Dr. Woloszyk was assisted in the production of this study by Ms. Kristy Smith, a graduate student, who assisted with the focus groups and provided helpful input into both the process and in summarizing the results of the meetings. Ms. Marian Barnes, Ms. Kay McCleese, and Ms. Kim Rohr provided additional secretarial assistance.

A special thank you is also extended to the over 200 different Michigan employers and labor leaders who either responded to a mailed questionnaire or participated in a series of focus groups for their cooperation, assistance, and valuable input. MCOVE greatly appreciates the time, insight, and contributions provided by these very busy individuals.

The Michigan Council on Vocational Education also recognizes the members of the Council for their guidance and support during the study. In particular, the members of the Evaluation Committee for their input and review of the survey instrument, the focus group process, and overall contributions to the

study--Chair, Ms. Patricia Hall, Mr. Lewis Driskell, Mr. Ozie Smith, Mr. Mark Alexander, and Mr. Chuck McCallum.

MCOVE also acknowledges several individuals for their assistance and help in identifying private sector employers and union representatives for participation in the mailed survey--Mr. James Folkening, Michigan Department of Education, Mr. Robert Pendleton and Ms. Barbara Schulz from the Michigan Jobs Commission.

In addition, the following people are to be thanked for their assistance and help in arranging a series of focus group meetings: Ms. Sharon Willard and Mr. Bill Castanier from the Michigan Jobs Commission for assistance in organizing focus group meetings with members of the Plastics Roundtable; Mr. John Austin from the Flint Roundtable with representatives from the Flint area; Dr. Donald Boyer, Dean of Social Science and Technical Education, Grand Rapids Community College with representatives from the Grand Rapids area; and, Dr. Joyce Tibbs, Director of Vocational Education, Detroit Public Schools with representatives from the Detroit area.

Lastly, appreciation is extended to the MCOVE staff for providing administrative support for the study: Ms. Virginia Yoder, Ms. Suzanne Branoff, Ms. Janise Gardner, Mr. John Williams, administrative support staff and Ms. Mary Miller, MCOVE Executive Director for her valuable input and advice.

LIST OF TABLES

1. Respondents by Specific Type of Organization 12
2. Respondents by Industry Sector 12
3. Respondents by Size of Organization 13
4. Respondents by Geographical Area 14
5. Respondents by Position within Organization 15
6. Curriculum Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions ... 16
7. Curriculum Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions 17
8. School-to-Work Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions 20
9. School-to-Work Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions 21
10. Evaluation Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions 23
11. Evaluation Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions . 24
12. Vocational Student Organization Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions 25
13. Vocational Student Organization Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions 26
14. Importance of Activity to the Delivery of Secondary Vocational Education 31
15. Importance of Activity to the Delivery of Postsecondary Vocational Education 33
16. Barriers to Increased Personal Involvement at the Secondary Level ... 37
17. Barriers to Increased Personal Involvement at the Postsecondary Level 38

FORWARD

Under section 112 of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 the Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) is required to "... advise the State Board and make reports to the governor, the business community, and the general public of the State regarding policies the State should pursue to strengthen vocational education and initiatives and methods the private sector could undertake to assist in the modernization of vocational education programs." It shall, furthermore, "submit recommendations to the State Board on the conduct of vocational education programs conducted in the State which emphasize the use of business concerns and labor organizations" and "recommend procedures to the State board to ensure and enhance the participation of the public in the provision of vocational education at the local level within the State, particularly the participation of local employers and local labor unions." To address these issues and to determine the extent of employer involvement and perceptions of public vocational education, the Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) contracted for a study of employers and labor union representatives within the State.

The study was intended to ascertain the extent of involvement with and the opinions of employers and labor representatives concerning public vocational education programs. Vocational education programs for purposes of this study were educational programs offered at area vocational centers, high schools, and postsecondary institutions designed to prepare individuals for careers requiring less than a baccalaureate or advanced level degree. This report documents the findings from the study and recommendations resulting from those findings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Extensive educational reform and school improvement efforts have been occurring in Michigan as a result of state and local educational agency efforts and initiatives. Although public school reform initiatives have affected vocational education, the private sector has also suggested changes in our educational system to develop competent students and a quality workforce in the future.

Vocational education and the private sector share a common concern about the quality of workforce preparation. Historically, business and labor have been actively involved with the delivery of public vocational education in Michigan. However, periodic assessments, various initiatives, and methods should be continually reviewed and needed changes incorporated into the delivery system to prepare students for an increasingly complex, dynamic, and ever-changing workplace.

A statewide population of employers and union representatives involved with vocational education in Michigan were surveyed to determine the extent of employer and union interactions with vocational education and document present employer perceptions as to the importance of their interactions. Survey opinions provided input for the conduct of subsequent focus group meetings regarding suggested changes, modifications, and enhancements to the present delivery. A total of five focus group meetings with another sample of employers were conducted to obtain additional employer perceptions of public vocational education in Michigan. This document summarizes the findings and recommendations from the statewide survey and the focus group meetings.

The major finding established by this study was that vocational education programs have solid employer support in Michigan. Individual respondents reported that they had extensive involvement with public vocational education and various interactions were viewed as being important to the overall delivery of vocational education in Michigan.

To be sure, the extent of involvement and the degree of importance attached to each interaction varied among the respondents and employer support for the vocational education was not unanimous. In addition to critiquing vocational education programs and practices, individuals also offered constructive suggestions for improvement.

Individual respondents and focus group members strongly felt that employers should have a meaningful role in vocational education curriculum design and development. Vocational education curriculum should be solidly grounded in industry-based skill standards. If this were the case, many employers believed that they would be able to hire more students directly from vocational education programs without providing a great deal more training or remediation. They believed that by following established industry benchmarks for success, vocational education programs would also be able to solicit more direct funding and equipment donations from private industry.

It was also believed that interpersonal skills; such as, teamwork, decision-making, problem-solving, and sociability should be taught along with technical skills in school-based and work-based settings. Business and industry expressed keen interest in hiring well-rounded workers, not just those with good technical skills.

A second major finding was that school-to-work initiatives are strongly supported and active employer participation is occurring in a variety of ways. Work-based learning opportunities are viewed as an essential and necessary tool in exposing students to the world of work. Students need career exposure opportunities as early as possible in school and to participate in work-based learning while enrolled in vocational education programs.

A third major finding was that employers felt that the benefits of vocational education need to be better marketed to students, parents, the general public, school counselors, and school board members. Vocational education programs have often been viewed as programs for students who do not plan to attend college, not as programs which increasingly provide the necessary foundation for advanced training and postsecondary education in high wage, high skill occupational areas. Employers believed that vocational education programs offered in area vocational centers, high schools, and postsecondary institutions must be viewed as programs with high academic and industry-based standards, and as challenging programs of study for all students.

I. PURPOSE OF STUDY AND OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES

Purpose

The mission of the Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) is to ensure that the people of Michigan have access to quality vocational education programs and services through its federal oversight and evaluation role. The Council views this activity as part of the State Board of Education's obligation to provide improved productivity and economic growth for Michigan.

Employers and labor organizations are key components of public vocational education and must be involved in shaping vocational education policies and providing information about programs, activities, and future directions. The Council sought input from employers and union leaders to determine those aspects of programming which can stimulate greater employer and labor organization involvement and interest in vocational education. This increased involvement will help to improve the productivity of Michigan citizenry and the economic development of the State. Therefore, the basic purposes of this study were to make recommendations to the State Board concerning:

- initiatives and methods the private sector can undertake to assist in the modernization of vocational education programs;
- evaluation criteria appropriate for vocational education programs within the State;
- the conduct of vocational education programs conducted in the State which emphasize the use of business concerns and labor organizations; and,
- procedures to ensure and enhance the participation of the public in the provision of vocational education at the local level within the State, particularly the participation of local employers and local labor unions.

Procedures

To fulfill these requirements, the Council organized and conducted a "Survey of Employers and Labor Union Representatives to Determine the Extent of Involvement in the Delivery of Vocational Education in Michigan" and conducted a series of five focus group meetings of employers. The intent of the

statewide survey and the focus group meetings was to gather information to recommend policies the State should pursue to strengthen vocational education. In addition, the study attempted to identify initiatives and methods the private sector could undertake to assist in the modernization of vocational education programs.

The survey determined the present interaction between business, industry, labor, and education in Michigan and formed an employer's perspective on the importance of current involvement. A mailed questionnaire was sent to private and public sector employers and labor organization representatives who were currently involved with employment and training programs within the state.

Individuals who received the mailed questionnaire represented the following: 1) private sector chairs from the 27 Michigan Works (formerly PIC Councils); 2) private sector chairs from the 45 School-to-Work partnerships; and, 3) employer and union representatives involved with the 39 formalized Tech Prep Education Consortia.

Using existing statewide databases helped to ensure a level of knowledge and familiarity with existing vocational education programming at area vocational centers, high schools, and postsecondary institutions. The population selected for the study also helped to eliminate misdirected mailings and provided the opportunity for diversity among the industry sectors and statewide input. The total population from the above groups represented 583 individuals. A total of 185 usable surveys were returned for an overall response return rate of 31.9%. Individual surveys were coded on optical scanning sheets and response rates were calculated using the testing services department at Western Michigan University.

Four major categories of questions comprised the questionnaire. First, general characteristics about the firm were requested. The type of information collected included the following:

- description of organization
- nature of industry
- number of employees at specific location
- geographical location

The second major area included specific characteristics of the respondent. The questions requested of individual respondents included the following:

- gender
- racial/ethnic identification
- position held within the organization

Next, respondents were asked to indicate their specific interactions in various activities with secondary institutions (area vocational centers and high schools) and postsecondary institutions (community colleges, Ferris State University, Lake Superior State University, and Northern Michigan University) offering public vocational education programs. Responses were requested of the participants in the following general areas of involvement:

- curriculum
- school-to-work
- evaluation
- vocational student organizations

In addition, respondents were asked to indicate how important the activity was to the delivery of vocational education for both types of institutions by using a Likert scale as follows:

1--"Not important at all"

2--"Not very important"

3--"Somewhat important"

4--"Important"

5--"Very important"

A question mark (?) was used for statements or questions where respondents did not know the answer.

A final category of questions asked respondents to indicate significant barriers to personal involvement with secondary and postsecondary vocational education. In addition, specific concerns or opinions about vocational education were asked of the respondents. The cover letter inviting participation in the study is found in Appendix A. The questionnaire is found in Appendix B and a thank you letter for respondents is presented in Appendix C.

II. EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT WITH PUBLIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

General Characteristics of Organizations

Respondents were asked to describe the specific type or nature of their organization. Responses were received from a total of 124 private sector employers, 31 public sector employers, 16 professional/trade associations, and 11 organized labor unions. A breakdown of respondents by specific type of organization is shown on Table 1.

Table 1

Respondents by Specific Type of Organization

Type of Organization	N	%
Private sector employer	124	68%
Public sector employer	31	17%
Professional/trade association	16	9%
Organized labor union	11	6%

Respondents were asked to identify the specific employment sector served by their organization. Responses were obtained from all 12 industry sectors identified on the survey. A total of 182 responses were received from all sectors with the manufacturing sector representing the largest single category with 84 responses or 45 percent of the total responses. Table 2 details respondents by industry sector.

Table 2

Respondents by Industry Sector

Nature of Industry Sector	N	%
Manufacturing	84	45%
Business or personal service provider	26	14%
Health-care provider	18	10%
Government (local, state, federal)	13	7%
Bank or financial institution	12	6%

Table 2 (continued)

Respondents by Industry Sector

Retailer	11	6%
Wholesaler/distributor	5	3%
Hotel/lodging and tourism provider	4	2%
Restaurant/food service	3	2%
Agriculture/agribusiness	2	1%
Construction	2	1%
Sales (e.g. insurance, real estate)	2	1%

Respondents were asked to identify the size of their organization by identifying the people employed at their specific location. The largest group of respondents were employed at organizations with more than 250 people, followed by medium and small organizations. Table 3 details respondents by size of organization.

Table 3

Respondents by Size of Organization

Size of Organization	**N**	**%**
More than 250 people	57	31%
Fewer than 25	50	27%
100- 250 people	39	21%
50-99 people	27	15%
25-49 people	11	6%

Respondents were asked to best classify the geographical area in which their organization was located. A total of 185 responses were received for the question dealing with the geographical area in which the organization was located. The responses reflect the geographical diversity within the state and are indicative of the statewide nature of the study respondents. Table 4 details the respondents by geographical area.

Table 4

Respondents by Geographical Area

Geographical Area	N	%
Small-sized city	85	46%
Rural	49	26%
Urban (central city)	26	14%
Suburb	25	14%

Characteristics of Respondents

A majority of the 185 respondents representing 134 responses or 72% were male and 51 responses or 28% of the respondents were female. In addition, 179 respondents were identified as White, not of Hispanic origin and 3% of respondents were ethnic minorities. Respondents were asked to identify how their position would best be described within their organization. A majority of the 185 respondents identified themselves as managers. Table 5 shows the respondents by position within their organization.

Table 5

Respondents by Position within Organization

Type of Position	N	%
Manager	112	60%
Owner	31	17%
Other	29	16%
Individual contributor	10	5%
Line supervisor (union)	3	.2%

Curriculum Involvement

Secondary

Vocational education cannot operate effectively without active involvement of employers and labor organizations. Involvement can and should occur in many ways. Involvement can occur when employers advise on curriculum development, cooperate with school-to-work initiatives, evaluate program quality, and assist with vocational student organizations. In the survey respondents were asked about the extent of their participation with public institutions offering vocational education. There are many kinds of interactions occurring between area vocational centers, high schools, employers and labor in Michigan. The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with curriculum development included: serving on district advisory committees (64%); assisting with curriculum development (52%); and, serving on a local program (craft) advisory committees (45%). Table 6 presents data on how employers are involved with curriculum development activities with

secondary institutions in Michigan. The entries in the table represent the percentage of respondents who indicated that they had been involved with secondary vocational education.

Table 6

Curriculum Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Served on a district vocational advisory committee (e.g. CEPD STW, Tech Prep, etc.)	185	118 (64%)	67 (36%)
Assisted with curriculum development of a vocational program	183	98 (52%)	85 (48%)
Served as a member of a specific area/local vocational program (craft) committee (e.g. Agriculture, Business, Health Occupations, etc.)	182	81 (45%)	101 (55%)
Provided a facility for on-site training of students (who were not company employees)	183	76 (42%)	107 (58%)
Donated equipment or supplies to a vocational program	184	91 (49%)	93% (51%)
Assisted with curriculum development of a tech prep program	182	67 (37%)	115 (67%)
Received customized training programs (for our individual employees or as part of a group of employers)	180	59 (33%)	121 (67%)

Postsecondary

Postsecondary institutions were defined as any of the 29 community colleges and the three public universities in Michigan approved to provide

vocational education programs of less than a baccalaureate degree. There were many kinds of activities occurring between employers, labor representatives, and postsecondary institutions. The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with curriculum development included: serving on a general college advisory committees (26%); receiving customized training programs (for our individual employees or as a part of a group of employers) (23%); and, serving on a specific occupational program (craft) advisory committee (23%). Table 7 presents data on how employers are involved with curriculum development activities with postsecondary institutions in Michigan.

Table 7

Curriculum Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Served on a general college occupational advisory committee (e.g. CEPD, STW, Tech Prep, etc.)	178	47 (26%)	131 (74%)
Received customized training programs (for our individual employees or as part of a group of employers)	179	42 (23%)	137 (77%)
Assisted with curriculum development of a college program(s)/course(s)	178	41(23%%)	137 (77%)
Served as a member of a specific occupational program (craft) committee (e.g. automotive technology, electronics, marketing, etc.)	179	38 (21%)	141 (79%)

Table 7 (continued)

Curriculum Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions			
Donated equipment or supplies to a vocational program	178	38 (21%)	140 (79%)
Assisted with curriculum development of a tech prep program	177	37 (21%)	140 (79%)
Provided a facility for on-site training of students (who were not company employees)	179	32 (18%)	147 (82%)

Employers generally see that involvement with curriculum development is critical to the success of vocational education. Employers want to have a very real role in the development of curriculum for vocational education. Support for this type of involvement is typified in the comments which follow:

> "The businesses in the area I represent are extremely eager to work in vocational programs at all levels. It is extremely difficult to have the schools, (K-12, tech center and post-secondary) understand the needs of businesses and in particular have the schools design new programs to meet the needs of the customer in a faster/flexible manner."
>
> "I would like to see high schools do more collaboration with businesses to increase abilities in problem solving, critical thinking, good writing, and reading comprehension by designing curriculums based on core areas of concentration for those not going on to college.
>
> "We must align vocational curriculum with what jobs and skills are used in the world of work."
>
> "In general, employers need to be asked. Academe has appeared hesitant in seeking employers input regarding progressive/applicable vocational programs. It's as if they feel we (employers) are not the eventual customer of their product (students). These roadblocks and barriers need to be broken down – employers really don't want to tell how to teach, we just want input as to what to teach."

> "Employers and vocational programs need to form close relationships. This will ensure both the student and employers needs are best met. The vocational program should take the first step in reaching out for area support. The busy businessperson is not going to go out and look for more volunteer work to fit into his/her free time. However, business may be willing to offer assistance if asked."

Curriculum involvement must, however, be meaningful and sincere or vocational education will suffer, as indicated in the following comments:

> "Educators must keep abreast of the job market and employer needs of vocational programs or risk becoming irrelevant. A problem I've encountered a few times is that some so-called advisory committees don't really want advice. They want industrial reps to rubber-stamp their programs after the fact. It is, therefore, refreshing, to serve on the few advisory committees that make curriculum and programmatic changes based on what outside advisors recommend."

> "Administrators, teachers, and teachers' unions must face the reality that part of the problem is a lack of reasonable expectations for teacher performance and teacher/school accountability for that performance. The critical success factor in the private sector is good people performing well in a competitive economy.

> "We are frequently contacted to do job shadowing and mentoring, but not to critique or provide input on curriculum development."

School-to-Work Involvement

Secondary

The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with school-to-work initiatives included: providing career information (82%); providing opportunities for company field trips (69%); and, hiring vocational education graduates as full-time employees (51%). Table 8 presents data on how employers are involved with school-to-work initiatives with secondary education institutions in Michigan.

Table 8

School-to-Work Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Provided career information to students(e.g. in-class presentations)	185	151 (82%)	34 (18%)
Provided opportunities for company field trips or tours	185	128 (69%)	57 (31%)
Hired vocational education graduates as full-time employees	183	94 (51%)	89 (49%)
Provided job shadowing experiences for individual students	185	90 (49%)	95 (51%)
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with cooperative education	185	71 (38%)	114 (62%)
Requested a student employability skills portfolio	185	47 (25%)	138 (75%)
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeship training	185	29 (16%)	156 (84%)

Postsecondary

The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with school-to-work initiatives at the postsecondary level included: providing opportunities for company field trips or tours (46%); providing career information to students (43%); and, hiring graduates from a program or students who completed specific courses as full-time employees (43%). Table 9 presents data on how employers are involved with school-to-work initiatives with postsecondary institutions in Michigan.

Table 9

School-to-Work Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Provided opportunities for company field trips or tours	178	82 (46%)	96 (54%)
Provided career information to students (e.g. in-class presentations)	178	77 (43%)	101 (57%)
Hired graduates from a program or students who completed specific courses as full-time employees	176	75 (43%)	101 (57%)
Provided job shadowing experiences for individual students	178	49 (28%)	129 (72%)
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with cooperative education	178	35 (20%)	142 (80%)
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeship training	178	293(13%)	155 (87%)
Requested a student employability skills portfolio	178	20 (11%)	158 (89%)

Employers are actively involved in a variety of school-to-work initiatives and, in general, are highly supportive of the schoo'-to-work movement. School-to-work activities are viewed by employers as relevant and meaningful to gain workplace skills. Some of the comments received about school-to-work initiatives in vocational education follow:

> "We need stronger and more frequent partnerships between business, industry, and education. We need more business and industry providing: tours/job shadows, high school co-op, college co-op and

internships, and apprenticeships. Education should reach out to business and industry and *demonstrate* flexibility and ability to change more quickly to meet needs."

"I am currently serving on the STW executive committee and a subcommittee on career majors. I feel the STW system is an excellent avenue for involving employers with parents to help develop a viable curriculum. However, this system will not work unless all educators accept it and endorse it."

"I feel St. Joseph County is a model of cooperation. We have an organization, our STW council, which works with the two major cities' chambers of commerce in providing educational opportunities combined with business involvement for all local high school districts and Glen Oaks Community College (county-wide). What a dynamic and fun (rewarding) experience it has been to see the changes that have occurred here over the past five years. Our educational system and businesses are both winners as a result."

"Expand co-op programs where possible. Continue to work with business and industry."

While extremely supportive of the efforts to link school-to-work, employers are sometimes frustrated by the time it takes to initiate training programs, determine the leadership in a given geographical area, get the meaningful involvement of the business community, and to make curricular changes as indicated by the comments which follow:

"Administrators must look at the needs of employers and skills relevant to today's workplace. We are trying to implement a plastics curriculum as a part of the overall STW program in St. Clair County. Although there is a high concentration of plastics/manufacturing companies in the area, ... I believe STW is moving too slowly to address the needs of employers as well as students and parents in guidance into manufacturing careers."

"Employer involvement seems weak in our county. Attendance to STW meetings is inconsistent. I am not sure if employers are committed to lead the STW involvement."

"It is time to rethink our entire educational system. Are we preparing the children for the real world? STW is probably the best tool we have if only we can get the business world more involved."

Evaluation Involvement with Vocational Education

Secondary

The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with evaluation of vocational education at the secondary level included: assisting with student performance assessments (46%); assisting in the development of skill standards (45%); and, reviewing local program quality (39%). Table 10 shows how employers are involved with vocational education evaluation efforts with secondary institutions in Michigan.

Table 10

Evaluation Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Assisted with student performance assessments (e.g. demonstrations, job interviewing, product quality reviews)	184	85 (46%)	99 (54%)
Assisted in the development of skills standards	185	83 (45%)	102 (55%)
Assisted with local program reviews for quality	184	71 (39%)	113 (61%)

Postsecondary

The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with evaluation of vocational education at the postsecondary level included: assisting in the development of skill standards (18%); assisting with student performance assessments (16%); and, reviewing local program

quality (15%). Table 11 presents data on how employers are involved with vocational evaluation efforts with postsecondary institutions in Michigan.

Table 11

Evaluation Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Assisted in the development of skills standards	177	32 (18%)	145 (82%)
Assisted with student performance assessments (e.g. demonstrations, job interviewing, product quality reviews)	178	29 (16%)	149 (84%)
Assisted with local program reviews for quality	178	26 (15%)	152 (85%)

Some of the comments received about evaluation in vocational education follow:

> "We need to develop skill standards through a collaborative effort driven by employers, perform needs assessments specifically designed for identified skills competencies, analyze the gap, and provide module-based training on skills and competencies, followed by evaluation of knowledge and performance. Reassessment is necessary in case there is a problem and the gap has to be re-analyzed. Students should have skills in many areas, not only technology. Personal management, teamwork, good attendance, drug-free behavior, good work ethic, assertiveness, as well as math and reading skills, are important."

> "Have employers present problems to individuals for resolution. Offer the student some personal time in your shop. Work with the learning institution the student is associated with to resolve actual shop floor problems. This information about a student will determined what the student is being taught and how well he/she uses the learning with the skills. This method can only improve the quality of learning for the student and benefit employers and what selections they may have."

Vocational Student Organization Involvement

Secondary

The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with vocational education student organizations at the secondary level included: donating awards and scholarships (23%) and judging competitive events (16%). Table 12 shows employer involvement in vocational student organizations and secondary institutions.

Table 12

Vocational Student Organization Involvement of Employers with Secondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Donated awards, equipment, scholarships, or use of facilities to a VSO organization	182	42 (23%)	140 (77%)
Judged competitive events for a vocational student organization (VSO) (e.g. BPA, DECA, FFA, FHA-HERO, HOSA, VICA)	185	30 (16%)	155 (84%)

Postsecondary

The most frequently occurring ways in which respondents indicated that they were involved with vocational education student organizations at the postsecondary level included: donating awards and scholarships (11%) and judging competitive events (5%). Table 13 shows employers involvement with vocational student organizations and postsecondary institutions in Michigan.

Table 13
Vocational Student Organization Involvement of Employers with Postsecondary Institutions

Activity	N	YES	NO
Donated awards, equipment, scholarships, or use of facilities to a VSO organization	176	20 (11%)	156 (89%)
Judged competitive events for a vocational student organization (VSO) (e.g. BPA, DECA, FFA, FHA-HERO, HOSA, VICA)	177	8 (5%)	169 (95%)

Other Types of Involvement

Secondary

Respondents were asked to indicate other types of involvement which they had experienced with secondary institutions. Eighty-five individuals or 47% of the 181 respondents to this survey question indicated that they had been involved in other ways with public vocational education at the secondary level over the last three years. Respondents indicated involvement with the development and evaluation of student portfolios, the provision of on-site technical training for vocational teachers, the design of employability skills classes, the development and design of academy programs, participation in recruitment/marketing activities and presentations for students, and leadership in vocational education area millage campaigns.

Postsecondary

Respondents were asked to indicate other types of involvement which they had experienced with postsecondary institutions. Thirty individuals or 18% of the

171 respondents indicated that they had been involved in other ways with public vocational education at the postsecondary level over the last three years. Respondents indicated their involvement included: serving as part-time occupational instructors; participating in the development of manufacturing training centers; participating as model interviewers; and, presenting at career fairs.

Findings Regarding Employer Involvement

Findings obtained from this part of survey are presented regarding employer involvement in vocational education.

1. Minorities and females were seriously under-represented among surveyed employers.

Although the pattern of responses to the survey may not accurately represent the membership of the three groups surveyed or the overall membership of local advisory committees, it is clear that women and, in particular, minorities were under-represented in the present study. If this pattern does in fact reflect an approximate picture of employer involvement in vocational education, concerted efforts must be initiated to actively recruit more women and minorities to assist with vocational education programming. Vocational education must actively seek the opinions and input of all citizen groups to obtain meaningful employer involvement in current and future programming efforts.

2. Significant numbers of surveyed employers involved with vocational education did not recognize their role or involvement with advisory committees.

Although all respondents surveyed were at least nominally involved with some aspect of vocational education advisory committees, it was interesting to

note that many respondents did not even recognize or indicate that they were currently serving on advisory committees for School-to-Work or Tech Prep (two of the three groups surveyed). Meaningful advisory committee involvement is crucial to school-to-work and tech prep initiatives, in particular, and to vocational education, in general.

3. Significant numbers of surveyed employers involved with vocational education are willing to provide company facilities for on-site training of students and company employees.

Employers who are willing to support vocational education through the use of existing company facilities should be viewed as a definite asset to increased employer involvement with vocational education. Vocational education should build upon this rich base of employer interaction to assist in the modernization of vocational education programs. The increased use of employer facilities in the provision of vocational education can help to minimize the equipment gap which exists in many public educational institutions. Work-site based learning can also help to ensure that participating students have exposure to the latest equipment and technologies for an increasingly sophisticated work environment.

4. Surveyed employers involved with vocational education overwhelming support the provision of career information through class presentations, tours, and field trips.

Employers are actively engaged in the provision of career information and opportunities through classroom presentations, company tours, and field trips at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. In addition, significant numbers of

employers are willing to provide job shadowing experiences and hired graduates and program completers from secondary and postsecondary institutions.

5. The use of student portfolios has had limited usage among surveyed employers involved with vocational education.

Student portfolios can be a powerful way to document student success in vocational education programs. However, employer involvement in the student portfolio effort has been minimal. This condition may be the result of a general lack of understanding about student portfolios or a genuine reluctance from surveyed employers involved with vocational education.

6. Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programming have had limited statewide usage among surveyed employers involved with vocational education.

Apprenticeship training is an effective and proven vehicle to prepare students for high-wage and high-skill occupations. Vocational education must make a concerted attempt to involve more employers in this worthwhile school-to-work program.

7. The use and development of industry-based skill standards has strong support among surveyed employers involved with vocational education.

The use of industry-based skill standards for curriculum in vocational education programs is highly desirable. Industry-based skill standards should be considered in student performance assessments, reviews of local program quality, and to assist in the development of curriculum for vocational education.

8. Vocational student organizations have had limited involvement among surveyed employers involved with vocational education.

The mission of every recognized vocational student organization is to assist in the development of student leadership, social, and technical skills. All of these skills make for well-rounded future employees. The potential of vocational organizations and an understanding about them is largely unrecognized by many of the employers surveyed who were involved with vocational education.

III. EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

In this section of the survey each respondent was asked to rate how important the activity was to the delivery of secondary or postsecondary vocational education. Respondents used the following scale:

1--"Not important at all"

2--"Not very important"

3--"Somewhat important"

4--"Important"

5--"Very important"

A question mark (?) was used for statements or questions where respondents did not know the answer. Mean scores were calculated for all listed activities.

Secondary

The highest ranked secondary level activities included: assisting in the development of skill standards (4.34); assisting with curriculum development of an area or local program (4.33); hiring vocational education graduates as full-time employees (4.32); providing career information to students (4.32); assisting in the development of tech prep programs (4.32); and, providing job shadowing

experiences. Lower-ranked activities included: requesting student employability skills portfolios (3.75); donating awards, equipment, scholarships, or use of facilities to a vocational student organization (3.74); and, judging competitive events for a vocational student organization (3.63). Table 14 shows the degree of importance and relative ranking of each listed activity.

Table 14

Importance of Activity to the Delivery of Secondary Vocational Education

Activity	Mean	N	?
Assisted in the development of skill standards	(4.34)	144	7
Assisted with curriculum development of an area or local program	(4.33)	154	7
Hired vocational education graduates as full-time employees	(4.32)	146	5
Provided career information to students	(4.32)	172	1
Assisted with the development of a tech prep program	(4.32)	142	10
Provided job shadowing experiences for individual students	(4.23)	157	0
Assisted with local program reviews for quality	(4.21)	147	7
Served as a member of an intermediate or local school district advisory committee	(4.24)	165	5
Served as a member of a local area/school program (or craft) committee	(4.19)	136	15
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with cooperative education	(4.17)	144	11

Table 14 (cont.)

Importance of Activity to the Delivery of Secondary Vocational Education

Provided opportunities for company field trips or tours	(4.12)	164	0
Been involved in other ways with public vocational education at the secondary level over the past three years	(4.11)	122	12
Provided a facility for on-site training of students (not company employees)	(4.09)	152	4
Assisted with student performance assessments (e.g. demonstrations, job interviewing, product quality reviews, etc.)	(4.04)	147	8
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training	(4.02)	127	16
Received customized or contract training programs (for our individual employees or as a part of a group of employees)	(3.95)	121	22
Donated equipment or supplies to a vocational program	(3.79)	144	9
Requested a student employability skills portfolio from potential job applicants	(3.75)	139	8
Donated awards, equipment scholarships, or use of facilities to a VSO organization	(3.74)	118	13
Judged competitive events for a vocational student organization (e.g. BPA, DECA, FFA, FHA-HERO, HOSA, VICA)	(3.63)	119	17

Postsecondary

The highest ranked activities for postsecondary activities included: hiring graduates from a program or students who completed specific courses as full-time employees (4.40); assisting with curriculum development of a college program(s) /course(s) (4.32); providing career information to students (4.31); assisting in the development of skill standards (4.31); and, assisting with the development of a tech prep program (4.18). Lower-ranked activities included: receiving customized or contract training programs (3.85%); requesting student employability skills portfolios (3.75%); donating equipment or supplies to vocational programs (3.64%); donating awards, equipment, scholarships, or use of facilities to a vocational student organization (e.g. BPA, Delta Epsilon Chi, VICA) (3.61%); and, judging competitive events for a vocational student organization (3.51%). Table 15 shows the degree of importance and relative ranking of each listed activity.

Table 15

Importance of Activity to the Delivery of Postsecondary Vocational Education

Activity	Mean	N	?
Hired graduates from a program or students who completed specific courses as full-time employees	(4.40)	122	10
Assisted with curriculum development of a college program(s)/courses	(4.32)	116	9
Provided career information to students	(4.31)	116	9

"..... Constant discussion takes place, but limited action occurs."

" Academic arrogance of postsecondary educators and administrators...They have all the answers."

"I was part of the tech prep effort, but it did not go anywhere."

V. SPECIFIC CONCERNS OR OPINIONS ABOUT PUBLIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Survey respondents were asked to address any specific concerns or opinions about vocational education offered within the state of Michigan in an open-ended question at the end of the survey. Some of the remarks from the thirteen pages of comments and opinions have already been previously excepted when discussing business/industry/labor involvement with curriculum, school-to-work, and evaluation involvement in vocational education. However, it is significant to note that three areas of additional areas were frequently mentioned by respondents--marketing, governance, and financing.

The public perception of vocational education and its image was an issue to many respondents. Many of the respondents indicated frustration that vocational education is not recognized enough for its benefits and positive impact on individuals and the economy. It is clear from the remarks which follow that extensive marketing of vocational education programs is needed to counter many incorrect opinions held by the general public and many school personnel about vocational education.

"I think the hardest job is for parents and home schools to become better educated first about the importance of vocational programs. Vocational education needs support from these areas to be a success. In our area, we have good programs available, but worry sometimes about enrollment. Not only do we have good programs, the administration spends valued time and effort drawing support from area businesses and the community, in general."

Table 15 (continued)

Importance of Activity to the Delivery of Postsecondary Vocational Education

Assisted in the development of skill standards	(4.31)	111	12
Assisted with the development of a tech prep program	(4.18)	117	7
Assisted with local program reviews for quality	(4.17)	113	9
Assisted with student performance assessments (e.g. demonstrations, job interviewing, quality reviews, etc.)	(4.17)	107	10
Provided job shadowing experiences for individual students	(4.14)	122	6
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with cooperative education	(4.13)	112	10
Served as a member of a specific college occupational program (craft) committee	(4.12)	115	11
Provided opportunities for company field trips or tours	(4.09)	129	5
Served as a member of a general college occupational advisory committee (e.g. CEPD, STW, Tech Prep, etc.)	(4.08)	125	8
Supervised occupational learning for students involved with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training	(4.08)	107	12
Provided a facility for on-site training of students (not company employees)	(4.00)	116	9
Received customized or contract training programs (for employees or as a part of a group of employees)	(3.85)	110	15

Table 15 (continued)

Importance of Activity to the Delivery of Postsecondary Vocational Education

Been involved in other ways with public vocational education at the post secondary level over the past three years	(3.80)	72	16
Requested a student employability skills portfolio from job applicants	(3.75)	106	14
Donated equipment or supplies to a vocational program	(3.64)	120	9
Donated awards, equipment, scholarships, or use of facilities to a VSO organization	(3.61)	108	11
Judged competitive events for a vocational student organization	(3.51)	106	15

Findings Regarding Employer Support for Vocational Education

Two major findings resulted from data obtained in the survey regarding employer support for vocational education.

1. Vocational education programs and activities have strong employer support among surveyed employers.

Additionally, a large number of surveyed employers believe that assisting in the development of skill standards and participating in curriculum development activities related to vocational education are important. Employer support their direct and meaningful involvement in the development of skill standards and curriculum for both secondary and postsecondary programs. Surveyed employers also placed high importance on hiring vocational education graduates and program completers as full-time employees.

2. School-to-work initiatives and activities are strongly supported by surveyed employers.

A second major finding concerning employer support for vocational education was that school-to-work initiatives are strongly supported. Surveyed employers were actively engaged in many and varied activities. Work-based learning opportunities are viewed as essential to the preparation of a skilled workforce. Work-based learning activities such as, field trips and job shadowing are needed; and, particular programs; such as, cooperative education and apprenticeship should be expanded. Several respondents indicated that financial incentives such as tax credits be used to secure increased involvement of employers in paid experiences, while continuing concerns about liability should be addressed for unpaid experiences.

IV. BARRIERS TO INCREASED PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH PUBLIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Secondary

Respondents were asked to identify their most significant barrier for increasing their personal involvement in various secondary vocational education activities. Limited time was cited as the most significant barrier to increased participation. Several respondents indicated that they were willing to do more, but personal time constraints prohibited them. Table 16 shows the barriers to increased personal involvement and the relative ranking of each barrier with secondary institutions.

Table 16

Barriers to Increased Personal Involvement with Secondary Institutions

Barrier	N	%
Limited time commitments	134	64%
Limited financial resources	19	9%
Never asked or invited to participate	19	9%
Lack of understanding about programs/activities	16	8%
Other, please explain	13	6%
Unable to obtain organization support	6	3%
Opposed to specific programs and activities	1	1%

(multiple responses were tallied)

Postsecondary

Similar to the secondary responses the most significant barrier to increased participation cited by 51 percent of the respondents for the postsecondary level was personal time commitment. However, 54 respondents or 27 percent of the respondents indicated that they had never been asked or invited to participate in postsecondary activities. Table 17 shows the barriers to increased personal involvement and the relative ranking of each barrier with postsecondary institutions.

Table 17

Barriers to Increased Personal Involvement with Postsecondary Institutions

Barrier	N	%
Limited time commitments	103	52%
Never asked or invited to participate	54	28%
Lack of understanding about programs/activities	15	27%
Limited financial resources	13	6%
Other, please explain	13	6%
Unable to obtain organization support	6	1%
Opposed to specific programs and activities	0	0%

(multiple responses were tallied)

The majority of respondents were most favorable to increased personal involvement as indicated in the following comment:

> "... Political support of vocational education is vital to the strength of the programs. A continual effort by vocational education to communicate the relevance and importance of vocational training at secondary and postsecondary levels must be shared with the private sector."

However, employer support was not unanimous regarding barriers to personal involvement. Several employers citing the need for programmatic improvements before they would be able to increase their personal involvement, as indicated in the following comments:

> "Some schools don't have good programs for students."

> "... Inability of educators to understand what is truly needed in the marketplace and deliver the product (students) in a timely fashion."

"One of my major concerns for the vocational education programs I have been involved in is the apparent lack of credibility the programs have in the eyes of the community, school boards, and counselors. The programs seem to be viewed as a place for those students who may not excel in the standard school curriculum. With so much focus placed on the number of students scheduled to attend college, I feel that many of the quality students are being steered away from vocational programs. The low percentage of students that actually attend college and then complete their degree should speak for itself. The basic misunderstanding about vocational education is that it is one or the other – college or vocational. The point we must convey to the community is the fact vocational education can and should be a stepping stone into post-secondary education, not in place of it. Students can gain college credit for most vocational programs, at the same time prepare themselves for employment. The minimum entry level skills required by many companies are offered through vocational programs. Most companies then offer some form of assistance for employees to further their education. Unless a strong state-wide campaign is launched to improve the perception and understanding of our vocational programs, their future in my opinion is bleak."

"Vocational education still has the image of a program for <u>difficult</u> students. If this be the case, keep it in the same vision as already exists. If in fact vocational education is for <u>all</u> students, the image needs to be changed."

Another issue raised in the comment section related to the issue of long-range planning and governance. Some respondents indicated that coordinated state and industry planning to address market needs along with regional boards is needed as reflected in the following comments:

"Need consistent and continuing approach at State level. Program seems to start/stop never deliver new initiatives due to new appointments to State boards/positions. Lack of continuity discredits the effort. Programs never seem to get completed or disappear before impact can be made."

"Excellent preparation for non-existent jobs is useless. Careful surveys should be made of where the job market is going, then address specific training requirements. At the moment, my company needs CAD/CAM operators, mechanical technicians, and (eventually) assistants for stereo lithographic operations."

"The State needs to have their officials sit down one-on-one with industry people to learn firsthand the concerns and everyday problems in growing a company with limited human resources."

"The concept of one-stop centers for employment services and training might eliminate the confusion of bureaucracy for employers and people seeking training and jobs. Keep the center driven locally by a cooperative effort of business and service providers and educational resources. We need to use the opportunities we have in our resources of tech centers and community colleges. Lansing and Washington need to enable, empower, and finance local initiatives."

Lastly, concerns about reliable funding opportunities for schools themselves and to encourage employer participation in the programs was expressed by several respondents in comments such as:

"I am concerned that the legislators and/or Governor is going to cut funding for these programs. Not everyone is college material. A cut in these programs will result in higher costs for employers and welfare."

"Many companies are reducing or downsizing, trying to achieve a lean organizational structure. This leaves too few resources (money, time, and people) to participate with schools to develop the basic vocational skills at a lower level. Most expect to find the skills they require when they need them. Few look forward far enough to growth skills they need for the future. Skilled employees are valuable. Skilled candidates for employment are getting harder to find – but we're not yet at a crisis point. So, employers haven't yet responded to this issue due to the lack of incentives that will offset the cost of involvement."

Many of the issues and concerns raise in the comment section of the survey were subsequently discussed in a series of focus groups and were used to develop specific marketing and policy recommendations.

VI. EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Five focus groups were conducted across Michigan during the months of February and March, 1996. They were held at various sites in Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, and Lansing. Participants for the focus group were selected from lists of names generated by representatives from the Flint and Plastics

Roundtables, a community college occupational dean, and a Detroit Public School vocational director. The identified individuals were from business and industry who had interest and experiences with employment and training programs for youth and adults in their respective regions of Michigan.

A total of 27 members of business and industry participated in the focus groups. Of that number, 17 were men and 10 were women. Minorities were represented by 11 individuals or 40% percent of the total composition.

Four thematic questions were posed of each focus group. The questions were derived from responses to the final question asked on the MCOVE employer survey, which requested additional information on how employer participation could be increased in vocational education. The four questions were as follows:

1. What are your expectations for a vocational education program?
2. What changes would you make if you were in charge of providing vocational programs and services?
3. How should the business and labor community be more meaningfully involved in the delivery of vocational education?
4. How strong is your awareness of what programs and services are available in vocational education?

Brainstorming, nominal group techniques, group discussion, and clarifying questions were employed to generate responses to the above questions. Thematic and supporting questions which were used during each focus group meeting are presented in Appendix D.

Findings Regarding Employer Perceptions of Public Vocational Education

Findings obtained from the focus group meetings identified a number of employer perceptions regarding public vocational education. Focus group participants felt that: 1) General public perceptions of vocational education are inaccurate; 2) Communities do not feel sufficient ownership of programs; 3) Business and industry are not allowed sufficient and meaningful input into the development of programs and curriculum; 4) Educational system needs take priority over student and employer needs; 5) Training is not tied directly enough to employment opportunities; 6) Too few instructors are both technically and pedagogically proficient; 7) Employability and "soft" skills are underemphasized; 8) Marketing and recruitment efforts are misdirected; 9) Program equipment and resources are not effectively utilized; and, 10) Changes are not implemented rapidly enough.

1. Public perceptions of vocational education are inaccurate.

Focus group participants expressed a general feeling that the general public does not have a clear idea of what vocational education encompasses. In many cases, even among employers, it is regarded as "dummy education" for students who cannot succeed in traditional programming.

Allowing this faulty belief to perpetuate discourages parents from letting their students become involved in vocational education, discourages students from enrolling in vocational education programs, and discourages employers from becoming involved in the process.

Part of this problem stems from school staff, particularly high school guidance counselors, who do not fully understand the concept and benefits of

vocational education, and therefore do not speak highly of its programs to students, parents, and the community.

2. Communities do not feel sufficient ownership of programs.

The perception of the individuals interviewed in this study was that vocational education is viewed as something initiated by the schools and for the schools. Focus group participants indicated often the only time they get to hear about programs is when schools are in need of money or equipment donations. Such behavior on the part of the schools makes business and industry feel used and discourages more meaningful participation in the process of education.

Several participants took offense at being asked to shoulder responsibility without any sense of control in the process, "If you want our help, ask us how we'd like to help, don't just demand what you want. We have ideas, too, and want to be listened to, not just talked to."

3. Business and industry is not allowed meaningful input in to the development of programs and curriculum.

Business and industry expressed frustration that historically they are either not asked to participant in the planning of programs and curriculum, or when their input is solicited, it is often ignored in favor of what works best for the schools.

Industry-based standards was the big catch phrase among focus group participants. By in large, they felt program curriculum should center around them. It is insulting to be asked for their expertise and then to have it tabled. "Why do schools bother to have us on their advisory boards when they aren't going to listen, anyway? I've got better uses for my time."

4. Educational system needs take priority over student and employer needs.

Focus group participants were extremely vocal that most vocational education programs are geared for the needs of the schools, usually at the expense of students and employers. There was a general feeling that the schools are more interested in maintaining control of vocational education than in ensuring students get the best possible education.

Meetings regarding vocational education are typically held at times and places that are convenient for school personnel, but not necessarily for business and industry. There needs to be more give and take. Schools were characterized as doing more taking than giving.

5. Training is not tied directly enough to employment opportunities.

Although several employers within the focus groups had recruited and hired students directly from vocational education programs, they expressed disappointment the programs were not an adequate feeder system for employers or a substantial job pipeline for students.

Debate centered around determining if schools should be in the business of teaching basic technical skills, or if schools should try and produce entry-level employees in a variety of technical fields. Although the problem was not resolved, it was addressed and should be noted by the education community. Focus group members appeared willing to provide good paying job opportunities for students in the event their training is tailored to the real needs of business and industry. Again, the term industry-based standards was mentioned.

6. Too few instructors are both technically and pedagogically proficient.

The most commonly heard complaint among focus group members was that many vocational education instructors are hopelessly behind when it comes to technical knowledge. Conversely, those who were recruited from business and industry expressly for their technical abilities rarely possess good teaching skills. There was concern for the impact this has within students in classroom and worksite-based settings. Members were unsure if schools are doing anything to address the technology-pedagogy gap, but feel it is a significant issue.

7. Employability and other "soft" skills are underemphasized.

Some focus group members felt work values should be taught along with academics and technical skills, while others felt they should be emphasized even more. This was a hot issue among the employers present. Some wanted students to leave school with a high degree of technical skill and felt they would have automatically acquired a work ethic along the way. Others felt employability skills should be taught either in conjunction with or in advance of technical skills.

One participant put it this way, "Give me a kid with a good work ethic and I can teach him anything he needs to know about the trade. Give me a kid with already great skills, but a poor work ethic, and he will end up costing me more in the long run."

8. Marketing and recruitment efforts are misdirected.

Most employers within the focus groups had initially learned about vocational education either through workplace participation or by networking with other supporters of vocational education. They feel school officials do not tap into these existing resources often enough.

Personal contact is what they believe to be most effective in promoting awareness of vocational education. They expressed frustration schools run most of their promotional campaigns anonymously, and spend too much money on promotional materials which never reach the right hands.

The general feeling was some of the best spokespeople for vocational education are past, successful participants; however, they tend to be overlooked in favor of brochures, press releases, and school staff as program promoters.

Participants expressed the need to better market the benefits of vocational education to all target audiences (parents, students, business /industry and educators, in particular, school counselors). The increased use of student success stories, industry sponsorship of students who have demonstrated excellence, personal and industry recognition, replication of "best practices" along with effective use of print and broadcast media were thought to be effective strategies to improve the image of vocational education and engender more general public support for the program.

9. Program equipment and resources are not effectively utilized.

According to one participant, neighboring vocational districts often duplicate programs and services. They also do not take enough advantage of worksite-based learning opportunities, which could save the programs a great deal of time and expense.

According to one participant, "Two neighboring districts would rather run two under-equipped, poorly staffed similar vocational programs, than combine forces and offer students from both districts the best quality training at one regional site. This is more about territoriality than practicality."

10. Changes are not implemented rapidly enough.

A strong criticism from the business and industry participants in the focus groups was that schools tend to spend more time generating ideas and working toward consensus than they do taking action. Bogged down by educational bureaucracy, decisions that need to be made quickly in order to capitalize on momentary opportunities never get made in time. This criticism was reflected in statements such as:

> "When can we stop talking about the problems and start doing something about them?"
>
> "What's more important, that we make everyone happy or that we get something done?"

A sample letter of invitation inviting participation in the focus group meetings is presented in Appendix E. A sample thank you letter sent to each participant is presented in Appendix F. In addition, summaries from each focus group session are found in Appendices G.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Vocational education needs to work in consort with entire communities, update its image, and use both past and present successful vocational education participants and supporters to convey that new image through personal contacts.

Vocational education programs need to include more students and employers in the planning and delivery of services, and look at realigning participation opportunities with the needs of students and employers, as opposed to just with the needs of the schools.

Neighboring programs should consider combining programs and exchanging students to improve the quality of training offered and to reduce the

problems of dilution of and duplication of services. Program instructors need to have sound teaching and technical skills and access to the kinds of equipment and resources students will actually be using on the job.

Skills taught need to be in line with industry-based skill standards. Students need to be shown the value of the vocational education they are receiving and to have the reassurance it is directly tied to employment opportunities upon completion of their respective programs. The process of change needs to become more expedient so important ideas and opportunities do not die before inception.

One focus group participant member said his daughter's school has issued a standing invitation for parents who work in industry to come in and speak to middle school and high school classes about their respective jobs. Being connected to one of the students lends credibility to the speaker and introduces students to someone they can go back to later to ask follow-up questions. Again, this relates back to the concept of personal contact being the most effective (but underutilized) marketing tool.

Ideally, vocational education instructors would be selected both on the basis of their technical knowledge and on their ability to convey that knowledge to students. But as there is not a large pool of these cross-trained individuals from which to draw, a special instructor training program should be created expressly for the purpose of creating technically and pedagogically proficient instructors. Instructors who do not have both classroom and technical experience at the time they were hired should be required to attend.

Training programs should be regionalized so services are neither duplicated or diluted. One focus group member commented programs such as

plastics technology require expensive equipment and are costly to run. He felt instead of having several poorly-equipped and under financed plastics programs, neighboring schools should combine resources and have one very good program to which they could all send students. This would be more cost effective across the board.

Additionally, instead of purchasing new equipment, schools should attempt to contract with business and industry to use their facilities and employees for training during downtime. This would also prove to be cost effective and give students hands-on contact with up-to-date equipment. Another focus group member suggested technology demonstrations be brought to school in the event students are not able to do site visits.

Schools and businesses need to work more closely together during "non-crisis" times (when the schools are not in immediate need). Community vocational education planning boards need to be established and to have representation from all fields. More importantly, these boards need to be granted not only responsibility, but the authority to implement the changes they feel are necessary to improve programs. If governing bodies are given the power to act on ideas, interest and participation in vocational education will increase.

High school guidance and counseling departments should look to retrain as or to replace existing counseling staff with "vocational advisors." These vocational advisors would be required to go out into the field and familiarize themselves with how vocational education career pathways work and the many career opportunities connected to technical training. As a result, they would take

a more positive view of vocational education and be more likely to present it as an attractive option to students.

Educating staff is only the first component of changing the image of vocational education programs. On a broader scale, successful graduates of vocational education programs need to speak out more and use personal contacts as a way of marketing programs. Success and personal experience are what is used to "sell" a variety of other products and services, why not vocational education? Vocational education role models should be identified and sent to schools for recruiting purposes.

In terms of marketing through media coverage, vocational education should take advantage of more of the free and/or low cost opportunities, including local cable access channels, newspaper articles, radio interview shows, and tradeshow display booths. Members of the media should be invited to vocational education activities and planning meetings so they will know first-hand what is going on and feel more invested in the outcome. Schools can no longer afford the assumption people will discover vocational education on their own. Business and industry and students should all be a part of information dissemination, instead of just the schools.

Vocational education related activities need to be scheduled according to what is convenient for business and industry and students, not always in accordance to what is convenient for schools. This point was consistently mentioned by both survey and focus group participants. A true partnership between business and industry and education would involve a willingness on the

part of schools to get to know and deal with each other on business and industry turf, as well as that of schools.

Employers who participate in vocational education programs need to be rewarded both intrinsically and extrinsically. Media recognition and written thanks are often given, but they need to be coupled with concrete proof their efforts and input are being put to good use. This is done most effectively on a personal basis. More than anything, the employers who participated in this study wanted to see their input result in action. Ideally, they would like to be rewarded with first access to qualified students whom they could hire right out of school and they would like to receive tax incentives for allowing students to work in their companies while still in school.

VIII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Considerable quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this study. Based upon the information gained from this study the following general policy recommendations are provided to the State Board of Education.

Initiatives and Methods to Assist the Private Sector in the Modernization of Vocational Education

1. Support efforts by the legislature and governmental agencies to provide tax credits and/or other incentives to encourage increased employer participation in paid school-to-work initiatives.
2. Support efforts to resolve employer concerns related to liability issues in unpaid work-based learning experiences and provide on-going technical assistance to employers regarding legal aspects of students in the workplace.

3. Provide technical assistance and mentoring support programs to individual employers or groups of employers desiring to connect school-based with work-based learning opportunities.

Evaluation Criteria Appropriate for Vocational Education Programs within the State

4. Accelerate the efforts of the Department of Education and the Michigan Jobs Commission to develop, establish, and articulate required industry-based skills standards which will challenge Michigan students to learn at world class standards.

5. Establish an assessment process, appropriate procedures, and methods to assess occupational and selected academic skills and knowledge; perhaps, through a skill certificate recognized by appropriate industry sectors.

Conduct of Vocational Education Programs to Emphasize the Use of Business Concerns and Labor Organizations

6. Support, from all appropriate sources, the efforts of area vocational centers, high schools, and postsecondary institutions to effectively involve business, industry, and labor representatives in meaningful ways in the process and development of appropriate vocational education curriculum; including, technical support and assistance in providing equitable membership, guidelines, and effective practices for advisory committees.

7. Implement vigorous and intensive programs of professional development through institutions with State Board approved vocational teacher-education programs to prepare industry personnel with appropriate

pedagogical skills and current vocational staff with periodic technological updating.

8. Encourage the development of a comprehensive statewide plan that provides a significant role for educational agencies in the policy-making decisions of local workforce development boards.

9. Encourage and support local school, area vocational centers, and postsecondary institutions direct and substantive involvement with vocational education programming and service activities to maximize services and avoid duplication within local workforce development board service areas.

Procedures to Ensure and Enhance Participation of the Public in the Provision of Vocational Education at the Local Level

11. Support, from all appropriate sources, a marketing program for all target audiences (parents, students, school personnel and businesses) to communicate to all Michigan citizens the realities of the new workplace and the opportunities vocational education can provide to the economic and human resource development efforts within the state of Michigan. Perhaps, "Communication Arts Industry Roundtable" should be established and charged with overall coordination of an effective statewide marketing program for vocational education.

12. Encourage local school, area vocational center, postsecondary and business/industry/labor initiatives that communicate to citizens the valuable role which is played by vocational education in the development of Michigan's current and future workforce.

In summary, the vocational education enterprise in Michigan enjoys a strong base of support. If the above policy recommendations are implemented vocational education's linkages to the business, industry, and labor communities will be strengthened and made even stronger.

APPENDIX A

MICHIGAN COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
608 West Allegan
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-6407

CHAIR:
Lewis E. Dinkelacker
President & CEO
Union Planning
Plan

VICE CHAIR:
P. Robert Vandenberg
President
Jacobson Heating and Cooling Company, Inc.
Grand Rapids

MEMBERS:

Mark Alexander
Administrative Assistant
Michigan State AFL-CIO Human Resources
Development, Inc.
Lansing

Felix Chew
Director
Calhoun Area Technology Center
Battle Creek

James Dittmer
Owner
Sunnyside Fruit Farm
Ludington

Patricia Hall
Dean of Occupational Studies
Lake Michigan College
Benton Harbor

Joyce Hawkins
Associate Professor
College of Technology
Ferris State University
Big Rapids

Charles McCallum
President
Venture Catalyst Network
East Lansing

Ron Morley
Administrative Assistant/Director
Clare-Gladwin ISD
Clare

Sharon Mosack
Director
Counseling and Career-Technical Education
Ferndale Schools
Ferndale

Gerald Ogilvie
Professor/Counselor
Northern Michigan University
Marquette

William Pearson
International Representative
UAW, Skilled Trades Department
Detroit

Gus Smith
Owner
Blackson Pest Control
Grand Rapids

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mary F. Miller

COPY/DISSERTATION/LETTER/THESIS WP7

December 11, 1995

Dear Michigan business/labor leader:

The Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) is a 13-member advisory committee established under the federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990. The Council advises the Governor, the State Board of Education, the business community, and the general public about the delivery and effectiveness of public vocational education programs and services within the state. MCOVE, in conjunction with a researcher from Western Michigan University (WMU), is conducting a study which will obtain information to improve vocational education for youth and adults within the state of Michigan.

The Council is asking for your assistance in completing a survey, which has been designed to assess the participation of and obtain recommendations from the public, particularly employers and labor union representatives, concerning the delivery of vocational education at high schools, area vocational centers, and postsecondary institutions within the State.

Although the survey is coded to facilitate the follow-up process, all individual responses will be kept confidential and reported only in aggregate form. You should be able to complete this questionnaire in about 20 minutes. Please complete and return the questionnaire by January 10, 1996 in the enclosed self-addressed, return envelope.

We know how very busy you are, but hope that you will take the time to contribute to this important statewide study. Your cooperation and prompt reply is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Miller
Executive Director
MCOVE

Carl A. Woloszyk, Ph.D.
Professor
WMU

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX B

Survey of Employers and Labor Union Representatives

to determine the

Extent of Involvement in the

Delivery of Vocational Education in Michigan

conducted by

Carl A. Woloszyk, Ph.D.

Professor

Western Michigan University

for

The Michigan Council on Vocational Education
P.O. Box 30008
608 West Allegan
Fourth Floor Hannah Building
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 373-6407

Survey Code _____

Vocational Education's Linkages to the Business Community of Michigan

The purpose of this study is to assess the participation and obtain recommendations from the public, particularly employers and labor union representatives, concerning the delivery of public vocational education at high schools, area vocational centers, and postsecondary institutions within the state of Michigan. In this study *vocational education* refers to publicly funded educational programs which prepare individuals for careers requiring less than a baccalaureate or advanced level degree.

All individual responses will be kept confidential and reported only in aggregate form. You should be able to complete this questionnaire in about 20 minutes. You may use a pen or a pencil to complete the questionnaire.

I. Section A. Background and Experience

1. Which of the following **best** describes your organization?

( ) organized labor union
( ) private sector employer
( ) professional/trade association
( ) public sector employer

2. In my organization, my position would **best** be described as which of the following?

( ) individual contributor
( ) line supervisor (union)
( ) manager
( ) owner
( ) other, (please describe) _____

3. Which of the following **best** describes the nature of your organization?

( ) agriculture/agribusiness
( ) bank or financial institution
( ) business or personal service provider
( ) construction
( ) government (local, state, federal)
( ) health-care provider
( ) hotel/lodging and tourism provider
( ) manufacturing
( ) professional sales (e.g. insurance, real estate)
( ) restaurant/food service
( ) retailer
( ) wholesaler/distributor

4. How many full- and part-time people are employed by your organization **at your location**?

( ) fewer than 25
( ) 25-49 people
( ) 50-99 people
( ) 100- 250 people
( ) more than 250 people

5. How would you **best** classify the geographical area in which your organization is located?

( ) rural
( ) small-sized city
( ) suburb
( ) urban (central city)

6. What is your gender?

( ) male
( ) female

7. What is your racial or ethnic identification?

( ) American Indian or Alaskan Native
( ) Asian or Pacific Islander
( ) Black, not of Hispanic origin
( ) Hispanic
( ) White, not of Hispanic origin

Section B. Extent of Involvement with Public Vocational Education

The following terms and definitions are provided to help you complete this section of the survey. You will note that the terms are *italicized* throughout the survey should you wish to refer to them.

area vocational centers: any of the 58 area centers in Michigan approved to provide vocational instruction to students from throughout a school system or region.

employability skills portfolio: a collection of a student's best work to provide physical evidence of employability skills learned in an educational program.

occupational programs: approved vocational-technical programs offered at public postsecondary institutions.

postsecondary institutions: any of the 29 community colleges and three 4-year universities in Michigan approved to provide occupational education programs of less than a baccalaureate degree.

pre-apprenticeship: a program for secondary students who become registered, as apprentices while completing their high school education. After high school completion the students continue their apprenticeship with the business and a postsecondary institution.

skills standards: a listing of essential knowledge and skills that are critical to worker performance in an industry or career area.

tech prep program: a combined secondary and postsecondary program which leads to an associate degree or two-year certificate.

vocational education: publicly funded educational programs which prepare individuals for careers requiring less than a baccalaureate or advanced level degree.

Part I. Involvement with secondary institutions

Directions for Part I. For Questions 8-27, please tell us **if you have been involved** in various vocational education activities with **secondary institutions** (high school or *area vocational centers*) by using a **Yes** or **No** response. Then tell us, **how important** you think the activity is to the effective delivery of vocational education at the secondary level, even if you feel that your personal involvement was not what you expected. Use the following scale for importance:

1. Not important at all
2. Not very important
3. Somewhat Important
4. Important
5. Very important

(?) Use for statements or questions that you do not know.

Activities	**I have ...**		**How important is this activity to the delivery of <u>secondary</u> vocational education?**					
	Yes	No	Not important at all---------Very important-----?					
			1	2	3	4	5	?
Curriculum Involvement								
8. Served as a member of an intermediate or local school district general vocational advisory committee (e.g. CEPD STW, Tech Prep, etc.)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
9. Served as a member of a specific area/local vocational program (or craft) committee (e.g. Agriculture, Business, Health Occupations, etc.)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
10. Assisted with curriculum development of an area/local program(s)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
11. Assisted with curriculum development of a *tech prep* program?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
12. Provided a facility for on-site training of students, (who were not company employees)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?

Activities	I have ...		How important is this activity to the delivery of secondary vocational education?					
	Yes	No	Not important at all---------Very important-----?					
13. Received customized or contract training programs (for our individual employees or as part of a group of employers)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
14. Donated equipment or supplies to a vocational program?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
School-to-Work Involvement								
15. Provided career information to students (e.g. in-class presentations, career nights)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
16. Provided opportunities for company field trips or tours?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
17. Provided job shadowing experiences for individual students?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
18. Supervised occupational learning for students involved with cooperative education?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
19. Supervised occupational learning for students involved with *pre-apprenticeship* and apprenticeship training?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
20. Requested a student *employability skills portfolio* from potential job applicants?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
21. Hired vocational education graduates as full-time employees?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
Evaluation Involvement								
22. Assisted in the development of *skill standards*?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
23. Assisted with local program reviews for quality?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?

Activities	I have ...		How important is this activity to the delivery of secondary vocational education?					
	Yes	No	Not important at all---------Very important-----?					
24. Assisted with student performance assessments (e.g. demonstrations, job interviewing, product quality reviews, etc.)	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
Vocational Student Organization Involvement								
25. Judged competitive events for a vocational student organization (VSO) (e.g. BPA, DECA, FFA, FHA-HERO, HOSA, VICA)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
26. Donated awards, equipment, scholarships, or use of facilities to a VSO organization?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
27. Been involved in other ways with public vocational education at the secondary level over the past three years?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?

28. If you answered **Yes** to "**Question #27**", please describe the activity(ies) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

29. Which of the following is the **most significant** barrier for increasing your personal involvement in various secondary vocational education activities?

( ) Lack of understanding about programs/activities
( ) Limited financial resources
( ) Limited time commitments
( ) Never asked or invited to participate
( ) Opposed to specific programs and activities
( ) Unable to obtain organization support
( ) Other, please explain _____

_____

Part II. Involvement with postsecondary institutions

Directions for Part II. For questions 30-49, please tell us **if you have been involved** in various vocational education activities with **postsecondary institutions** (public community colleges, Ferris State University, Lake Superior State University, Northern Michigan University) by using a **Yes** or **No** response. Then tell us, **how important** you think the activity is to the effective delivery of vocational education at the postsecondary level, even if you feel that your personal involvement was not what you expected. Use the following scale for importance:

1. Not important at all
2. Not very important
3. Somewhat important
4. Important
5. Very important

(?) Use for statements or questions that you do not know

Activities	I have ...		How important is this activity to the delivery of <u>postsecondary</u> vocational education?					
	Yes	No	Not important at all---------Very important-----?					
			1	2	3	4	5	?
Curriculum Involvement								
30. Served as a member of a general college *occupational* advisory committee (e.g. CEPD STW, Tech Prep, etc.)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
31. Served as a member of a specific college *occupational* program (or craft) committee (e.g. automotive technology, electronics, marketing, etc.)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
32. Assisted with curriculum development of college program(s)/course(s)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
33. Assisted with curriculum development of a *tech prep* program?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
34. Provided a facility for on-site training of students (who were not company employees)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?

Activities	I have ...		How important is this activity to the delivery of postsecondary vocational education? Not important at all---------Very important-----?					
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
35. Received customized or contract training programs (for our individual employees or as part of a group of employers)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
36. Donated equipment or supplies to a college *occupational* program?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
School-to-Work Involvement								
37. Provided career information to students (e.g. in-class presentations, career nights)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
38. Provided opportunities for company field trips or tours?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
39. Provided job shadowing experiences for individual students?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
40. Supervised occupational learning for students involved with cooperative education?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
41. Supervised occupational learning for students involved with *pre-apprenticeship* and apprenticeship training?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
42. Requested a student *employability skills portfolio* from potential job applicants?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
43. Hired graduates from a program or students who completed specific courses as full-time employees?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
Evaluation Involvement								
44. Assisted in the development of *skill standards*?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?

Activities	I have ...		How important is this activity to the delivery of <u>postsecondary</u> vocational education?					
	Yes	No	Not important at all---------Very important-----?					
			1	2	3	4	5	?
45. Assisted with program/ course reviews for quality?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
46. Assisted with student performance assessments (e.g. demonstrations, job interviewing, product quality reviews, etc.)	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
Vocational Student Organization Involvement								
47. Judged competitive events for a vocational student organization (VSO) (e.g. BPA, Delta Epsilon Chi, VICA)?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
48. Donated awards, equipment, scholarships, or use of facilities to a VSO organization?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?
Other Activities								
49. Been involved in other ways with public vocational education at the postsecondary level over the past three years?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5	?

50. If you answered **Yes** to **"Question #49"**, please describe the activity(ies)

51. Which of the following is the **most significant** barrier for increasing your personal involvement in various postsecondary vocational education activities?

( ) Lack of understanding about programs/activities
( ) Limited financial resources
( ) Limited time commitments
( ) Never asked or invited to participate
( ) Opposed to specific programs and activities
( ) Unable to obtain organization support
( ) Other, please explain _____

_____

52. Please use this space to address any specific concerns or opinions about vocational education offered within the state of Michigan. For example, how could employers become more involved with the delivery of vocational programs or services? How could vocational programs be improved? What other issues should be addressed in the delivery of vocational education within the state?

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and participation in this study.

The results of this study will be included in the Michigan Council on Vocational Education report titled, "The Extent of Employer Involvement in the Delivery of Vocational Education in Michigan".

Available from
Michigan Council on Vocational Education
P.O. Box 30008
608 West Allegan
Fourth Floor Hannah Building
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-6407

APPENDIX C

MICHIGAN COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

608 West Allegan
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-6407

CHAIR:
Lewis E. Drukell
President & CEO
Union Printing
Flint

VICE CHAIR:
P. Robert Vanderson
President
Jacobson Heating and Cooling Company, Inc.
Grand Rapids

MEMBERS:

Mark Alexander
Administrative Assistant
Michigan State AFL-CIO Human Resources
Development, Inc.
Lansing

Felix Chow
Director
Calhoun Area Technology Center
Battle Creek

James Dittmer
Owner
Sunnyside Fruit Farm
Ludington

Patricia Hall
Dean of Occupational Studies
Lake Michigan College
Benton Harbor

Joyce Hawkins
Associate Professor
College of Technology
Ferris State University
Big Rapids

Charles McCallum
President
Venture Catalyst Network
East Lansing

Ron Morley
Administrative Assistant/Director
Clare-Gladwin ISD
Clare

Shirlee Musick
Director
Counseling and Career-Technical Education
Ferndale Schools
Ferndale

Gerald Opbrey
Professor/Counselor
Northern Michigan University
Marquette

William Peterson
International Representative
UAW, Skilled Trades Department
Detroit

Otse Smith
Owner
Blackout Pest Control
Grand Rapids

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mary F. Miller

February 22, 1996

Dear Michigan business/labor leader:

On behalf of the Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) thank you for recently completing the "Survey of Employers and Labor Union Representatives to Determine the Extent of Involvement in the Delivery of Vocational Education in Michigan". The survey was the initial phase of a statewide study concerning the effectiveness of public vocational education programs and services within the State.

In February a series of five focus groups were held in various locations based upon comments and recommendations received from the survey. During the months of March and April, public hearing testimony will be analyzed and visits to areas where exemplary partnerships exist between business, industry, labor, and educational agencies will be studied.

The final report containing the findings and recommendations obtained through the statewide survey, focus groups, public hearing testimony, and site visits will be prepared for the Michigan State Board of Education. If you should desire a copy of the final report it will be available beginning July 1, 1996 by contacting:

The Michigan Center for Career
and Technical Education
230 Erickson Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824
1-800-292-1606 or 517-353-4397

Once again thank you for your interest, cooperation, and support of vocational education for youth and adults in the state of Michigan. Your assistance with the statewide study is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Carl A. Woloszyk

Carl A. Woloszyk, Ph.D.
Professor
Western Michigan University

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX D

Focus Group Questions

#1. What are your expectations for a vocational education program?

#2. What changes would you make, if you were in charge of providing vocational programs and services?

#3. How should the business and labor community be more meaningfully involved in the delivery of vocational education?

- **How should business/labor representatives be approached for involvement in vocational education?**
- **What would you be willing to do, but haven't been approached?**
- **How should participation in support of vocational education be rewarded?**

#4. How strong is your awareness of what programs and services are available in vocational education?

- **How do you learn about vocational programs and services?**
- **How should information be shared about vocational programs and services?**

APPENDIX E

MICHIGAN COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

608 West Allegan
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-6407

CHAIR:
Lewis E. Driskell
President & CEO
Union Printing
Flint

VICE CHAIR:
P. Robert Vanderson
President
Jacobson Heating and Cooling Company, Inc.
Grand Rapids

MEMBERS:

Mark Alexander
Administrative Assistant
Michigan State AFL-CIO Human Resources
Development, Inc.
Lansing

Felix Chow
Director
Calhoun Area Technology Center
Battle Creek

James Dittmer
Owner
Sunnyside Fruit Farm
Ludington

Patricia Hall
Dean of Occupational Studies
Lake Michigan College
Benton Harbor

Joyce Hawkins
Associate Professor
College of Technology
Ferris State University
Big Rapids

Charles McCallum
President
Venture Catalyst Network
East Lansing

Ron Morley
Administrative Assistant/Director
Clare-Gladwin ISD
Clare

Shirlee Musick
Director
Counseling and Career-Technical Education
Ferndale Schools
Ferndale

Gerald Ojibway
Professor/Counselor
Northern Michigan University
Marquette

William Peterson
International Representative
UAW, Skilled Trades Department
Detroit

Dixie Smith
Owner
Blackout Pest Control
Grand Rapids

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mary F. Miller

January 15, 1996

Dear Genesee County business/labor leader:

The Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) is a 13-member advisory committee established under the federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990. The Council advises the Governor, the State Board of Education, the business community, and the general public about the delivery and effectiveness of public vocational education programs and services within the state. MCOVE, in conjunction with a researcher from Western Michigan University (WMU), is conducting a study which will obtain information to improve vocational education for youth and adults within the state of Michigan.

The Council is requesting your attendance and participation at a focus group meeting. The focus group meeting has been designed to obtain recommendations from local area employers and labor union representatives, concerning the delivery of vocational education at high schools, area vocational centers, and postsecondary institutions within the State.

The focus group meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 31, 1996 at the University Club in Flint (see attached map). The focus group meeting will begin with breakfast at 8:30 AM and conclude by 10:30 AM.

Please complete and return the registration/response form by January 26, 1996 in the enclosed self-addressed, return envelope or FAX the form to WMU at (616) 387-3353. We know how very busy you are, but hope that you will take the time to contribute to this important statewide study. Your cooperation and attendance will be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Miller
Executive Director
MCOVE

Carl A. Woloszyk, Ph.D.
Professor
WMU

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FOCUS GROUP
REGISTRATION/RESPONSE FORM

_____ **YES**, I will be able to attend the Wednesday, January 31, 1996 Focus Group Meeting

_____ **NO**, I am unable to attend the Wednesday, January 31, 1996 Focus Group Meeting

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

_____

City: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone #: _____

NOTE: Your phone number will be used only to notify you, if inclement winter weather forces a cancellation or postponement of the focus group meeting.

APPENDIX F

MICHIGAN COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

608 West Allegan
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-6407

CHAIR:
Lewis E. Driskell
President & CEO
Union Printing
Flint

VICE CHAIR:
P. Robert Vanderson
President
Jacobson Heating and Cooling Company, Inc.
Grand Rapids

MEMBERS:

Mark Alexander
Administrative Assistant
Michigan State AFL-CIO Human Resources
Development, Inc.
Lansing

Felix Chow
Director
Calhoun Area Technology Center
Battle Creek

James Dittmer
Owner
Sunnyside Fruit Farm
Ludington

Patricia Hall
Dean of Occupational Studies
Lake Michigan College
Benton Harbor

Joyce Hawkins
Associate Professor
College of Technology
Ferris State University
Big Rapids

Charles McCallum
President
Venture Catalyst Network
East Lansing

Ron Morley
Administrative Assistant/Director
Clare-Gladwin ISD
Clare

Shirlee Musick
Director
Counseling and Career-Technical Education
Ferndale Schools
Ferndale

Gerald Ojibway
Professor/Counselor
Northern Michigan University
Marquette

William Peterson
International Representative
UAW Skilled Trades Department
Detroit

Ozie Smith
Owner
Blossom Pest Control
Grand Rapids

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mary F. Miller

March 7, 1998

Dear Focus Group Participant:

On behalf of the Michigan Council on Vocational Education (MCOVE) thank you for recent participation in a series of focus group sessions held during the month of February. Your participation will help to determine recommendations concerning the involvement of business, industry, and labor in the delivery of public vocational education programs and services within the State.

During the months of March and April, public hearing testimony will be analyzed and visits to areas where exemplary partnerships exist between business, industry, labor, and educational agencies will be studied. The final report containing the findings and recommendations obtained from a statewide survey, the focus groups, public hearing testimony, and site visits will be prepared for the Michigan State Board of Education in June.

After the final report is presented I will be forwarding to you a complimentary copy as a token of appreciation for your active participation with this statewide study. Once again thank you for your interest, cooperation, and support of vocational education for youth and adults within the state of Michigan. Your assistance with the MCOVE study was appreciated.

Sincerely,

Carl A. Woloszyk, Ph.D.
Professor
Western Michigan University

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX G

DETROIT FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

1. WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

- Students leave programs with skills matching employers expectations.
- Students receive a minimum amount of training to minimize future employer training costs.
- Students will gain a broad understanding of all aspects of industry and their potential opportunities within industry.
- Curriculum is designed around sets of industry skill standards.
- Establish a workforce development system.
- Establish an employer relationship to a given company - vocational student organizations (VSOs) can be a strategy.
- Technical careers should take leadership.
- Academic skills, including team-building and problem-solving, are studied.
- Employer protection is available for work-site activities.
- Cultural and moral issues are addressed.
- Competitiveness is stressed.
- Corporations, communities, and businesses are included in developing a master plan for proactive educational strategies (e.g. New Detroit).

2. WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU MAKE IF YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES? (Ranked in order)

1. Develop a "life path" for education, highlighting vocational education and academic pursuits.
2. Change higher education (university) feelings about vocational education.
3. Use applied academics in all classes.
4. Provide job training, college, business, to prepare for self-sufficiency.
5. Use vocational education to restructure all aspects of learning.
6. Involve employers in industry-driven curriculum development.
7. Expose students to career education and programs at an earlier age.
8. Make vocational education training a non-political issue.
9. Create opportunities for industry/education exchange programs.
10. Change image of vocational education and technical centers.
11. Expose students to industry and vocational tech centers for motivation.

3. HOW SHOULD THE BUSINESS AND LABOR COMMUNITY BE MORE MMEANINGFULLY INVOLVED IN THE DELIVER OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- School must demonstrate commitment to potential employers.
- Stress lower recruitment costs.
- Change image of technical skills, careers, and the work field.
- Provide tax incentives to participating employers.
- Provide public and industry recognition for individuals and companies, pins, plaques, TV, radio and newspaper spots, and mention within trade publications.
- Involve more small and mid-sized companies in vocational education movement.
- Be asked to advertise in school-related publications.
- Disseminate grants/awards to schools for student excellence in vocational education.
- Schools should talk more about vocational. ed. success stories.
- Schools should track students for 5 years after graduation to prove how successful vocational. education people have become.

4. HOW STRONG IS YOUR AWARENESS OF WHAT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- Personal contact in GM training.
- Personal experience of students in the workplace.
- Role played in school district - position of knowledge.
- Personal research for program or company.
- Need more roundtables to find out what's going on.
- Survey employees to determine their ideas regarding vocational. education training.
- Need to clarify school to work and tech prep concepts.
- Need more advertising with the mass media.

FLINT FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

1. WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

- It should look at aptitudes and skill levels of students.
- Its primary focus should be to provide awareness and exposure to the entire array of opportunities available.
- Students should not be locked into choices until they have a greater awareness of what is available (unlike the German system).
- Students should know there are offerings beyond those of tech centers.
- Speakers, site visits, and assessments should be used more frequently.
- Students should exit the programs ready to go on to the next step of education/training without remediation.
- Instructors should be up on the latest technology ("Schools need to free up time and ingenuity so teachers can be innovators.").

2. WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU MAKE IF YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES?

- Bring faculty and staff together as a team.
- Assess and clarify the team's expectations.
- Work together to develop schoolwide contextual teaching.
- Sponsor ongoing field trips and technical training to update teaching.
- Set up or tap into a speaker's bureau through local business councils.
- Have business and industry bring technology demonstrations to school.
- Have colleges bring hands-on applications of their offerings to school.
- Use existing resources/facilities on downtime rather than creating new.
- Spend school dollars to set up classroom simulations of technology.
- Add a "successful thinking" pre-requisite before students learn skills.

3. HOW SHOULD THE BUSINESS AND LABOR COMMUNITY BE MORE MEANINGFULLY INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- Find ways to include smaller businesses by changing the format and hours required for participation in program planning/advisory meetings.
- Use existing participants to help identify (target) and recruit others.
- Use more networking and one-to-one recruitment of businesses (a personal approach is more effective than a written one).
- Keep contacts brief and to the point. Time is money so don't waste it.
- Training/meeting facilities.
- Resource materials.
- Leadership and trainers ("train the trainer")
- Tax credits to participating business and industry.
- Media recognition

- ongoing awareness series
- recognition of participation

- Personal thank-yous for involvement.

4. HOW STRONG IF YOUR AWARENESS OF WHAT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- Lack knowledge of "feeder programs."
- Knowledge is haphazard, mostly depends on "happening" into it.
- Need county-wide or state-wide information system.
- Develop or tap into existing media roundtable to increase recognition.
- Everyone involved must be made to see how they can benefit.
- Students need to be made aware of the structure of the system.
- Education about education should be a top priority.

GRAND RAPIDS FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

1. WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

- Provide students with pertinent skills for today's economy.
- Include special needs people and develop support services for them.
- Must instill lifelong learning principles within students.
- Assist students with the development of soft skills, such as team-building, self-discipline, work ethic, and a global view.
- Instructors from business and industry must know how to teach.
- Teachers from public education must have up-to-date technical skills.

2. WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU MAKE IF YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES? (Ranked in order)

1. Provide more money and up-to-date equipment for programming.
2. Include work-site-based training in all programs.
3. Regionalize training to avoid diluting it.
4. Combine work ethics training with skills training at a younger age.
5. Make vocational training a requirement for all 9th and 10th graders.
6. Place a priority on the professional development of instructors.
7. Make program information more inclusive for all students.
8. Establish national standards/benchmarks for success.
9. Present vocational technical education to students at a much earlier age.
10. Parallel program criteria with actual standards within business/industry.

3. HOW SHOULD THE BUSINESS AND LABOR COMMUNITY BE MORE MEANINGFULLY INVOLVED IN THE DELIVER OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- Focus on continuing traditions within a profession.
- Have an employer showcase/career fair featuring training, <u>not</u> hiring.
- Focus on employer needs, rather than what's convenient for the schools.

REWARDS

- Feed the participants.
- Have recognition ceremonies.
- Send thank-you letters to participating businesses.
- Give gifts to participants.
- Make sure participants receive media attention.
- Let participants see how their input is being put to use.
- Offer tax incentives.

4. HOW STRONG IS YOUR AWARENESS OF WHAT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

HOW LEARNED ABOUT IT

- Found out through another program business was involved in.
- Heard about it through advisory board involvement.
- Networked through a church member.
- Learned about it through a school homework assignment.

WAYS TO GET THE WORD OUT

- Host career days with break-out sessions in the junior highs.
- Whet the student appetites at much younger ages.
- Identify vocational role models and bring them to schools.
- Personalize the invitation to participate.
- Educate school counselors as to the range of vocational programs.
- Replace school counselors with "vocational advisors."
- Utilize free advertising on public access channels and newspapers.
- Emphasize having needed skills is more important than a degree.

LANSING FOCUS GROUP #1 SUMMARY

1. WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

- Teach skills needed for occupations – application and applied knowledge.
- Teach communication skills.
- Teach practical skills, both hard and soft, with more emphasis on hard skills.
- Establish linkages with employers.
- Establish career pathways and stress earning potential for students.
- Emphasize life-long learning in the field (staff development - EDPs can help).
- Start over with learning of counselors - make sure they understand industry.
- Provide good equipment for training.
- Review current curriculum and proposed curriculum development.

2. WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU MAKE IF YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES? (Ranked in order)

1. Develop a marketing program for all target audiences (parents, students, school personnel, and businesses).
2. Establish business/education exchange programs for counselors and teachers.
3. Change delivery of vocational education to fit employers needs (time, location, transportation, alternatives).
4. Set up vocational centers with industry support and sponsorship following the apprenticeship model.
5. Set up an evaluation system to get students into programs.
6. Expose students to up-to-date equipment.
7. Develop an industry-operated educational delivery system.
8. Establish learning centers for students and employers.
9. Survey employers' needs about skills, jobs, etc. to change curriculum.
10. Start programming at an earlier age among school children.
11. Make it a requirement students learn about careers.

3. HOW SHOULD THE BUSINESS AND LABOR COMMUNITY BE MORE MEANINGFULLY INVOLVED IN THE DELIVER OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- Involve employers in the development of a shell of standards.
- Provide internship opportunities or apprenticeships.
- Stress to employers the return on their investment.
- Help business and industry upgrade current employees ("pre-selected" for new employees).

- Select models for effectiveness and replication.
- Recognize companies for involvement by giving tax credits, because apprenticeship incorporates a commitment.

4. **HOW STRONG IS YOUR AWARENESS OF WHAT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?**

- Found out about programs through individual research.
- Provide government incentives for participation.
- Recognize individual participation.
- Highlight "success" in local press and trade publications.
- Put vocational education on professional association agendas.
- Push vocational/technical education more through education groups.
- Use standardized brochures for parents, businesses, etc.

LANSING FOCUS GROUP #2 SUMMARY

1. WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

- Students learn the basic skills needed for entry level manufacturing jobs.
- Schools work in a partnership with businesses to aid the student.
- Training is geared to fill employment needs within particular industries.
- "Soft skills," (communication, teamwork, and work ethics) are emphasized.
- School curriculums should be contemporary and technically-driven.
- Job opportunities are provided to students who do well.
- Skills taught are those actually used within industry.

2. WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU MAKE IF YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES? (Ranked in order)

1. Ensure vocational education programs enjoy a higher status within schools.
2. Tie programs directly to employment opportunities, upon completion.
3. Increase the amount of time and focus high school curriculums devote to vocational technical programming.
4. Teach skills that are more applicable to business - closer marriage.
5. Designate a planning board comprised of business/parents/school and give the board the power to facilitate change.
6. Recruit better instructors by making the programs more attractive to them.
7. Teach students the value/benefits of vocational -technical education.
8. Develop more cooperative internships at manufacturing sites.

3. HOW SHOULD THE BUSINESS AND LABOR COMMUNITY BE MORE MEANINGFULLY INVOLVED IN THE DELIVER OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- Enlist their expertise when developing curriculum.
- Actually listen to what they say, not just hear them.
- Increase the flexibility of participation - times, dates, types of involvement.
- Put the student and business needs ahead of the needs of schools.
- Establish more co-op sites.
- Promote manufacturing as a viable alternative to college.
- Certify technically-proficient people to teach the curriculum.
- Reinstate and support vocational programs that have been eliminated.
- Allow for hands-on involvement, not just meetings.
- Invite them to show students the link between education and employment.
- Take advantage of the natural partnership between business and industry.

4. HOW STRONG IS YOUR AWARENESS OF WHAT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

- Learn about programs through potential and existing employees.
- Personal contact from other participating businesses increases credibility.
- Be sold on the importance of each job to the overall success of the product.
- Use the children of employees to sell particular industries to other students.
- Increase the technical awareness of the school career guidance counselors.
- Utilize former program graduates in recruiting efforts.
- Schools should host ongoing or periodic program information forums.
- Meet under circumstances other than when programs are issue-driven.

CE073 415
AVA 96

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION'S LINKAGES WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY	
Author(s): CARL A. WOLOSZYK, PH.D	
Corporate Source: WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY KALAMAZOO, MI 49008-5041	Publication Date: DEC 1996

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic/optical media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) or other ERIC vendors. Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following two options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 1

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 2

☒ Check here
For Level 1 Release:
Permitting reproduction in microfiche (4" x 6" film) or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic or optical) *and* paper copy.

☐ Check here
For Level 2 Release:
Permitting reproduction in microfiche (4" x 6" film) or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic or optical), but *not* in paper copy.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but neither box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

"I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic/optical media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries."

Sign here→ please

Signature: Carl A. Woloszyk	Printed Name/Position/Title: CARL A. WOLOSZYK, PH.D PROFESSOR	
Organization/Address: WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIV 1009 THOMPSON BLDG KALAMAZOO, MI 49008-5041	Telephone: 616 387-3721	FAX: 616 387-3353
	E-Mail Address: Carl.Woloszyk@WMICH.EDU	Date: 2/12/97

(over)

Full study available from:

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:	Michigan Center for Career & Technical Education
Address:	230 Erickson Hall Michigan State University East Lansing, MI 48824-1034 (517) 292-1606
Price:	Title of Document: Vocational Education's Linkages with the Business Community of Michigan

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:	
Address:	

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

Acquisitions Coordinator
ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
Center on Education and Training for Employment
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1090

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to: